1. Names and Name-giving

553 951 Immediately following the birth, but not before the detachment of the afterbirth, the child receives its name from the father who has already thought it up before the delivery but has kept it secret until then. The name is publicly announced, accepted without objection or formalities, and is considered to be the permanent principal name. The child receives a second name from his mother; many Pangwe designated this name as "big," that is, important -- probably because they had heard it exclusively from their mother in early childhood. Later, however, in giving their names, they usually mention the name given by the father, unless that name sounds unpleasant to the person concerned or if he wants to hide his identity with the intention of deceiving -- especially the Whites. In that case he prefers to use the name given by his mother. /278/

It is in any case a fact that the name given by the mother is close to its bearer's heart, and for this reason friends often use it as a pet name.

551 I shall herewith give a number of names that I learned, together with their explanations. As can be seen from the abbreviations of subtribes or tribal groups (N = northern Pangwe, S = southern Pangwe) placed after them, only a small number of the names is distributed over the entire Pangwe region; the majority do not extend beyond a few subtribes, so that a thoroughly experienced investigator can frequently tell by the name alone what a given native's place of origin is.

According to their basic significance, we can divide the names into the following groups:

I. Names of religious origin (only in the case of boys' names);
II. Names that allude to an attractive skin color;
III. Names that designate the desirable characteristics which one wishes for the child;
IV. Names that are supposed to bring good luck;
V. Names intended to indicate that the man will become the terror of his enemies;
VI. Names that express a bad characteristic, with the idea of thereby causing the bearer, on the contrary, to develop good characteristics;

river again (until now she has washed in her hut), puts on new clothes presented by her husband, and starts cooking for him again and working in her garden. Special purification has been carried out if the baby has died in the interval. The prohibition against sexual relations lasts as long as the child is at the breast; to break this taboo would make it nyu meyôm, drink sperm, which might lead to its death.

Postpartum care is given by the mbialé binga, then by the woman's mother or aunt or ntyi. This consists of vaginal douches and external and internal napkins of vegetable compresses.

The baby may be suckled only by its mother or a woman of the mother's blood, a grandmother or maternal aunt. If this is impossible, the baby cannot live (at least in rural districts where concentrated milk is unknown). Traditional pharmacopoeia possesses, however, extraordinary vegetable lactic stimulants, probably without equivalent in the European pharmacopoeia.

b. Childhood

The old custom was not to name (yôlé) the baby until it was taken out of the house; until then it was usually called by the name of a small animal, like "squirrel" or "palm rat." Nowadays the name is given within a few days of birth, if for no other reason than to comply with citizenship regulations. /93/

A name, jôé or jui (also meaning nose, order, command, authority) includes the éyôlé, the individual's own name, and the atinan, complementary name chosen from the biyôlé of ancestors according to clan or family traditions, which are on the decline. Formerly, a cognomen was added to these, a mebatan (1) or jôé mebatan (lit. salutation name), sometimes conferred at initiation. This mebatan

1. Trilles translates this word as "genealogy": lañ mebatan means both "to recite the genealogy" and "to recite the salutation," simply because this was in fact the formal way of introducing oneself; a newcomer's genealogy determined how his hosts would "greet" him. True genealogy, pedigree, is éndan, related to ndan, tattoo mark, emblem.

7: Trilles--112 M-5 (1893-1912) 1912 FH9 Fang FH9

1. Birth and Name Giving

844 Only women, the village matrons, are allowed to help a mother in childbirth. Men are absolutely excluded, even husbands. A woman who gives birth on a journey prefers to go off by herself into the forest rather than ask for her husband's help.

As soon as the child is delivered, his umbilical cord is cut and he is carefully washed. The remnants of the cord are wrapped in a cloth and buried out of the way. In the case of a chief's son, especially that of the head chief, the remains are buried, as we have seen, at the foot of a sacred fig tree. (1)

[824 778]

1. Ficus elastica.

Great importance is given to the tree's growth, and to touch it is strictly forbidden. Any violation of the tree would be considered an attack upon the human being.

[689]

851 A few days after birth, the baby is carried to his father, 847 who may accept it or refuse it. However, the latter [571] happens only if the child is deformed or crippled, in which case it is ruthlessly sacrificed. The religious rites (1) connected

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1. See Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie [Bulletin of the Neuchâtel Geographical Society], 1910, "Les rites de la naissance chez les Fân" [Birth Rites among the Fang], by Father Trilles.

with birth are numerous, but the only ones that seem to me to be totemic are name giving and the choice of the baby's totem.

The name is solely the father's choice; it is often determined by attendant circumstances, atmospheric or other, or by some local happening, a hunt, a fishing expedition, the

553 arrival of a stranger. Hence, a certain number of names that at first would seem totemic, because they copy the names of animals and plants, are not so at all. In general, the eldest son's name is that of one of his forebears, a grandfather or ancestor, who is thought to come to life again in him. Twins, [845] however, always receive special names of matched things, which go in twos, like Sun and Moon, Wind and Rain, Storm and Thunder, etc.

851 As soon as the child has been given a name, his father 779 takes it in his arms and carries it into his hut, where he opens the évora biéri and puts the baby down on the lid. He then takes the ancestral skulls one by one and puts them on the child's head, then places the family totem in its hand. The father with his fingernail often scrapes a bit off of the antelope horn holding the remnants of his personal totemic sacrifice, and puts some of this into the child's mouth. This, strictly speaking, is the dedication to the totem. The father then takes the baby back to its mother so that she may anoint it with oil and rub it with red wood. After the mother, or any other woman present, has attended to this, the father again takes the child and puts another bit of the totem into its mouth. A she-goat, a sheep, or at least a fowl is then offered to the family totem and to the spirits of the departed, according to sacred ritual. The remains [778] of this sacrifice, the ashes, etc., are enclosed in a small antelope horn, which is hung around the baby's neck or above his genital organs: this will be his amulet. Finally, the father gives the baby his personal totem, which will be recalled to him later on when he is old enough to understand. At that same time he will be taught what are the family, clan, and tribal totems, and the duties and obligations they impose on him. This instruction is part of the mébara. [572]

2. Adoption

597 In certain cases, a few children are adopted by a head of 727 the family when given as ransom for murder or spared in the